GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
STEEL
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1932
ANSWERED ON:15.12.2003
MANUFACTURING OF POOR QUALITY OF WHEELS BY DURGAPUR STEEL PLANT
SUNIL KHAN;SURESH RAMRAO JADHAV (PATIL)

Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government is aware that the wheels made by Durgapur Steel Plant (DSP) for Railways are of very poor quality and fractures in these wheels have resulted in certain cases of rail accidents;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;

(c) the action taken by the Government in this regard;

(d) whether the Wheel and Axle plant in DSP was visited by the Steel Minister and Chairman of SAIL in October 2003 to investigate the radius of the wheel and the quality;

(e) if so, the findings thereof; and

(f) the follow-up action taken thereon?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI BRAJA KISHORE TRIPATHY)

(a) Wheels manufactured at Durgapur Steel Plant are 100% as per the quality requirements specified by the Indian Railways in their relevant specification. Wheels are tested/inspected by the inspecting agency of Railway i.e. Rail India Technical and Economic Services (RITES) before despatch.Fracture of wheels have taken place, in most cases, after prolonged usage and under application of severe breaking conditions leading to thermal cracks.

(b) In view of (a) above, question does not arise.

(c) In the last two years SAIL has upgraded the Wheels & Axles testing facilities to make the Wheels maunfactured at Durgapur Steel Plant exactly in line with the stringent requirements of Indian Railways. Facilities such as Online Ultrasonic Testing Machine, Magnetic Particle Testing Machine, Online Hardness Testing Machine, Universal Testing Machine, Optical Brinell Harness Tester and Macro-Etching facility have been installed. Further improvements, as needed, are regularly considered under the guidance of Railway Design and Standard Organisation (RDSO).

(d) & (e): Steel Minister alongwith Chairman, SAIL visited Wheel & Axle Plant at Durgapur in October 2003They have reviewed the whole gamut of issues involving manufacturing and quality assurances system at DSP and were satisfied with the same.

(f) In view of (d) & (e) above, question does not arise.